

UNIQUE SPEAKER EXCHANGE

What may be a unique event in the history of UFO investigation took place on Tuesday, June 24.

The President of MUFON Ontario, Tom Theofanous, spoke at a meeting of the Ontario Skeptics Society. Many of you will be more familiar with them as 'CSICOP'.

In an attempt to involve the skeptics, and their knowledge of certain subjects, in the investigation process, members of the board of MUFON Ontario have made overtures to combine forces when it comes to investigation of UFO cases.

Arrangements were made to exchange speakers at the respective organisations meetings. Tom would speak at the skeptics meeting, and Professor Michael De Robertis, President of the Ontario Skeptics, would speak at the MUFON meeting the following night.

Tom was cordially received at the meeting, and in a non-offensive manner, stated that if any group that professed to be a scientific organisation criticised the UFO phenomenon from their armchairs, their assessments weren't worthy of attention.

He spoke of going to great lengths in the investigation process, including responding to phone calls at three or four in the morning, as the only real way to assess a situation. He espoused no particular belief with regard to what UFOs represented, only a

genuine curiosity about an unknown phenomenon.

During the video presentation, which included sightings similar to the ones Tom and some other MUFON members experienced last year, along with segments of the Mexico sightings of the past 5-6 years, the questions started.

First out of the blocks was Henry



Dr. Michael De Robertis, Professor of Physics & Astronomy, York University, the Executive of the Ontario Skeptics, speaks on 'UFOs & Aliens: A Skeptic's Perspective' at the June, 1997 MUFON Ontario General Meeting.

Gordon, a long time member of the skeptics group who once wrote a skeptics column for the Toronto Star. He asked what the point was of looking at such videos since there was no way to corroborate the veracity of them. This is a bit like asking what purpose looking at a video of a bank hold-up has.

Some sugges-

tions were offered as to what MUFON could do in their investigations with regard to data that is collected. There seemed to be some sentiment that there are repeat perpetrators of hoax's and that we could cut down on the "noise" in the signal if we were more vigilant in this area.

A woman in the skeptics group confessed to having seen, or actually imagining she had seen, similar sights as some of those shown in the video, and wondered at the time who she could contact to inquire about it.

It remains to be seen if the hoped for co-operation will be achieved, however the olive branch has at least been offered.

Dr. De Robertis honoured his part of the bargain, and spoke at the MUFON meeting the following night. He was well received by most, and could have faced many more questions had time permitted.

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[see page 9 for Nikolaos Balaskas article for 'The Ontario Skeptic'.]

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IS PUBLISHED BY

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES:
Canada \$25.00
All others \$25.00 U.S.
Make cheques or money orders payable to:
MUFON Ontario.



FROM THE EDITORS

Over the years there has been much discussion and argument, in both ufological and skeptical circles, about the lack of 'scientific investigation'.

CSICOP has called the claims of UFO witnesses and experiencers "preposterous". Ufologists bemoan the lack of "integrity" and open-mindedness on the part of skeptics. There have been occasions when ufologists and skeptics have almost come to blows over their differences. Seemingly, there has been little or no middle-ground. Granted, Philip Klass and several prominent ufologists have shared stages together at various conferences and symposia but seldom, if ever, have the two sides exchanged speakers.

Professor Michael De Robertis, President of the Ontario Skeptics and Tom Theofanous, President of MUFON Ontario are to be applauded for addressing the monthly general meetings of each others organisations.

Neither the Ontario Skeptics nor MUFON Ontario expect any major position-shift in the attitudes of either group toward each other. However, perhaps as a result of the initial exchange, at some point in the future, the two organisations will work together, honestly, in trying to resolve one of the most baffling mysteries of our time.

MUFON ONTARIO BOARD CHANGES

There've been some changes on the Board of MUFON Ontario....

Sue Kovios has stepped down as Secretary and Maggie Matsamura has taken over.

To Sue, our sincere thanks for all of your sterling work establishing and maintaining our membership and subscriber databases - to Maggie, welcome and thanks for volunteering!

**MUFON ONTARIO'S
JULY 30 GENERAL MEETING
7:30 pm 175 St. Clair Ave. W. Toronto
Errol Bruce-Knapp
&
Michael J. Woods
'WHAT WE DID FOR OUR
SUMMER VACATION:
ROSWELL'S 50TH'**

Robertt Neilly has also, unfortunately for us, had to step down. We'll miss his boundless energy and down-to-earth commonsense at Board meetings. Thanks for it all, Rob.

The vacancy Robertt's resignation created has been filled by 'UFO' Joe Daniels from London, Ontario. Joe is well-known to 'Netizens' and surfers. His Webpage is a wealth of information for cases and people ufological.

Rumour has it that British author Timothy Good is coming to Toronto in October to speak at The Royal Canadian Military Institute. We'll keep you updated in upcoming issues of *The Ufologist*



WEB ART - ARTIST UNKNOWN

THE ENIGMA CONTINUES



by
Hugh F. Cochrane

Five decades after the existence of UFOs was brought to public attention there is still no indisputable evidence as to the true nature of these light-emitting or dark-body objects. While much has been gleaned from the accounts supplied by witnesses and from the laboratory analysis of affected materials gathered at the site, the phenomenon itself seems real enough yet remains an enigma, and the proposed solutions being put forth are poles apart.

The prevailing North American view is that UFOs as a whole are 'nuts and bolts' alien craft yet the solid evidence needed to back up the claim has never been uncovered. As it stands, the whole ET hypothesis is based on witness testimony which, while credible, does not provide the hard evidence needed to prove that these light-emitting and dark-body objects are material 'craft' manufactured in a factory on another planet or in another dimension. In fact since 1976 many European ufologists have followed Jacques Vallee's interpretation in which UFOs belong in the realm of the paranormal. Others are equally convinced that UFOs are phantasms and the product of hallucinations. On the ET side, Betty Hill's star chart of an unknown arrangement of stars at a distant point in the universe does not seem to have been a hallucination. The information was proven correct and was recalled from a star chart Betty had seen aboard the alien craft. But does that prove Betty and her husband Barney were physically aboard an alien 'craft' when she saw this chart?

As it stands today we have numer-

ous accounts by highly credible witnesses who claim to have experienced an encounter with aliens aboard their 'craft'. Often these individuals will say the encounter changed their lives, that it dramatically altered their consciousness and gave them a new perspective. Some claim to have been physically healed during the encounter while others are able to show scars where samples of flesh were said to have been taken from their body during experiments conducted aboard the alien craft.

There's no doubt that a close encounter with a UFO can be a dramatic or traumatic event and the experience is not easily forgotten. It can be a strongly impressed memory. But on the other hand weal so have well documented cases of religious 'stigmata' where wounds appear on the individual's body as proof of their strong belief.

In an article for *Pursuit* (Vol.20, #3) on 'The Nature of the UFO Reality', R. Perry Collins recounted the experience of a man who, returning home from work at 2 am, took a detour past a reservoir that should have added 15 minutes to his 20 minute drive home. Instead he arrived home five hours later with no conscious recollection of the missing time, except that he felt - extremely relieved and energetic. When he finally recalled the trip he told how he had stopped the car at the shoreline and got out to look at a UFO hovering above the water and in a trance-like state began to walk toward it. At that point he instantly found himself aboard the UFO consciously watching his physical self walk toward the UFO. While the man refuses to say any more about the incident, he did tell the investigator, "I trust them. They're away ahead of us. They don't want me to say anymore."

After relating a few more U.S.-accounts he sums with these general statements. First is that the phe-

nomenon demonstrates technological feats beyond our level of capability. The phenomenon manifests activities employing psychic abilities beyond those of present-day human beings. The phenomenon demonstrates an intelligence with an intent to manipulate our world at several significant levels. The phenomenon is so powerful that we can do very little to significantly prevent or interrupt its activities.

So how certain can we be about the reality of encounters like this? Did the events experienced by the witness occur physically in what we perceive as our reality, or was the whole scenario staged through some form of virtual reality in which the energy radiated by the UFO invaded the wavelengths used by the human mind to access the individual's normal five senses to give realism to the event?

There's no doubt that UFOs exist. They have been seen by hundreds of thousands if not millions of people. They have been photographed and have left behind physical evidence of their presence. But the photographs rarely show anything more than a blurry image of an indefinite shape and the physical evidence left behind suggests an event involving the activity of energies beyond our laws of physics.

So what is a UFO? Is it a 'nuts and bolts' construct or a paranormal event? There is no clear-cut answer and the problem may be because the object we perceive as a UFO may only be a small portion of an otherwise invisible natural phenomenon. While our focus has been on the visible portion, the major portion of the event

...among the reports on file are a wide range of cases where people have vanished from streets, from inside buildings, even from their cars...

may be beyond our perception. It may be a phenomenon with the capacity to act as a two-dimensional interface between this reality and other realms in space and time. So have other entities learned how to use these natural occurring phenomena as a 'doorway' between our reality and theirs?

While that possibility is nothing more than speculative, consider this: why is it that those who report experiences where they 'stepped into the past' and found themselves in the midst of a historic event, or at a particular era in history where they experienced what seemed like an actual conscious state while they viewed or even participated in a replay of events of that past time. Yet these individuals make no mention of an encounter with alien beings or UFOs?

There are others who reported encountering what seems to be a solid invisible wall which does not block their normal view of their surroundings but is physically impenetrable. Still others have reported finding themselves surrounded by an invisible wall that blocks out all sounds, and any attempt to pass through it results in them finding themselves going in the opposite direction until they again encounter the invisible enclosure. And, again, the witness makes no mention of any UFO or alien involvement.

If a natural force exists that can at times create a shimmering, two-dimensional interface between this reality and somewhere else in time and space, then we need to know if there is any relationship between this force and the energy powering the UFOs or the green or gray 'Fogs' that can instantly engulf and transport an individual hundreds or even thousands of miles away to a new location where they are left to find their own way home.

Are we to believe these individuals

are the victims of alien pranksters? Or are they victims of an accidental encounter with a natural phenomena at work in our environment that we are unaware of? One that can manifest as a light-emitting or dark-body object, that can surround itself with green or gray fogs, or provide a transparent shimmering interface that hides another realm. Add to all of this the cases where people and animals disappear, ships and planes have vanished without a trace and there never seems to be an explanation for any of these events.

Looking back on this, it may well be that we have spent 50 years logging reports of light-emitting and dark-body objects without getting a complete profile of the entire phenomenon. We have taken for granted that the visible object represented the entire phenomenon and it became the focus of our attention. We have assumed that the visible object was a self-contained mobile manifestation whose light was a radiation from the hull of a craft, something on the level of a visible aura generated through a technology alien to our science. We did not entertain the possibility that the energy behind the brilliant light being emitted was being supplied from elsewhere through an invisible medium that at other times provided the basis for other unexplained events that are usually excluded from the narrow confines of ufology.

When Michael A. Persinger became involved in the search for answers concerning UFOs he, like others, noted that UFO events seemed to favour geologically faulted areas and in the beginning sought solutions in seismically generated energies as the cause of UFO events. He soon reached the same conclusion as Charles Fort had years before when he proposed that natural forces acting through fault lines could be the source of the energies powering a whole

range unexplained events. When Persinger included a similar wide range of events he wound up with 9 major categories and 9 subcategories of events and subjected these to a computer analysis in which the events were correlated with known seismic activity and found some promising results.

Persinger also found that his originally proposed seismic stress and piezoelectric activity fell short of providing the energy needed to produce a twenty-foot wide glowing anomaly that could reach to high altitude and persist at times for up to a half hour without becoming depleted.

While Persinger's seismic stress and piezoelectricity may have lacked the required strength to energise those phenomena termed UFOs, that does not mean the connection between fault lines and anomalous events is just coincidental. There is sufficient evidence on file to show that this linkage is a common factor in a wide range of unexplained events.

That being the case, if we are ever going to understand these phenomena, then we need to be open to other possibilities. Particularly those suggesting that some still unrecognised natural phenomenon may be behind many of these unexplained aerial anomalies and even mysterious events in the paranormal realm.

From this wider perspective it can be said that those investigators living around Lake Ontario are in a unique position because this lake and its surrounding shores have had a long history of bizarre events that span the spectrum of unsolved mysteries. Those events include balls of light above the water and light-absorbing balls beneath the surface. It also includes reports of sea serpents, burning phantom ships, vanishing ships, planes and people and slinking black creatures and animal mutilations

around its shores. Along with these are a whole menagerie of phantom helicopters and bizarre accidents that have gone without explanation.

If, as elsewhere, these events can be linked to the geological state of the area, then this region may be a prime example of that association. Over the past few years new evidence has emerged to reveal that this lake and its surrounding shores have been harbouring an unsuspected expanse of geological faulting and fracturing that caused many geologists and others to re-examine their long-held beliefs. New theories have proposed that the St. Lawrence Valley Rift may extend from the Atlantic through to Lake Ontario and Lake Erie before continuing south towards the Mississippi Basin. Numerous fault lines have been found in the region surrounding the lake and many are believed to continue beneath the lake to the south shore and to the western end of the lake.

The 1994 discovery of a three-by-six mile long area of buckling and ridging just three miles south of the Toronto Islands and the 1997 discovery of a 60-foot sub-escarpment just off Bellville, which may be a continuation of the 60-foot drop reported in the 1970s just off Oshawa. All contribute to the upset in geologic thinking about this area. And it may well be that the disappearance of two large islands shown on a 1630 map of the lake but not shown on the 1670 map may be a further indication of the long term instability of this region.

Added to these might be the recorded 24-by-24-foot monolith of solid rock said to be 300-feet tall and reaching to within three feet of the surface near the entrance to Presquille Bay in the eastern end of the lake. It vanished one night in 1804 during a storm and with it the government ship *Speedy* along with more than half of

the officials of the government of Upper Canada. No trace of the ship or the monolith have ever been found and the water at that point is less than 90-feet deep.

If the extensive buckling, the missing islands, the underwater escarpment and monolith are examples of the variety of geologic activity this area is capable of producing, then the geologists have their work cut out for them. Because over the past decades all of these sites, and particularly the ridging off the Toronto Islands, have been among the areas where the highest number of UFO and strange events have been most active.

During the 1970s in particular, the area now known to be occupied by the huge anomaly off the Toronto shoreline played host to untold numbers of UFO events, missing aircraft and people. In fact it was during a private search for the wreckage of an aircraft that had vanished off the radar screens several years ago that brought this huge anomaly to the attention of the geological community. Incidentally, the remains of the missing aircraft still have not been found.

Dr. Persinger has provided further evidence to link these mysterious events with seismic activities. He made a study of the range of those wavelengths that can trigger unexpected effects in the human brain and has proposed that these wavelengths could be carried on the energies produced by seismic activity. Among the effects he has listed are nausea, disorientation, hallucinatory states and altered states of consciousness. The first two conditions have been reported by people visiting crop circle and animal mutilation sites and the condition caused them to leave the area. Once outside the event site perimeter, the conditions ceased.

If we apply these or any of the other conditions to the case of the member

of the Jacques Cousteau diving team who lost his life in the Fall of 1980 while preparing for an underwater photographic mission to record the numerous wrecked ships in the "triangle" in the eastern end of the lake, then this diver may have come within range of the energies being radiated by the fault systems in this area, suffered disorientation or nausea and died from trying to surface too fast during this state of confusion. Since this event, four more experienced divers, two of whom were licensed diving instructors, have lost their lives in a similar way while diving in this same 'triangle' area.

Another example might be the British Nimrod bomber that crashed during the 1995 air show off the CNE grounds. In the closing moments of their demonstration, the pilot circled out over the lake for his final run back towards the 'Ex' and his route appears to have taken him over the western end of the huge area of ridging in that part of the lake. After that the plane continued on a long downward glide path that took it to its doom beneath the waters of the lake near the Island Airport. There was no evidence that the pilot or co-pilot were aware of their situation or tried to correct the manoeuvre.

According to recent reports, UFOs are again being seen over Lake Ontario in the area of the ridging where their nightly activities were common in the 1970s. With the above possibilities in mind it might be wise for any of those planning to investigate this area of ridging in particular to be aware of these possibilities be alert to any unusual behaviour by those around them until more is learned about the possible hazardous radiations around this site.

In the meantime, the best methods for exploring areas where these energies may be active is through remote sensors which, while they might be

prone to malfunctions due to the energies being radiated, could be retrieved and repaired; something that's not as simple when a human life is involved.

There is much to be learned from this lake that has earned its centuries long reputation as 'The Mother of Mysteries'. But it will not give up its secrets easily and may exact its toll from every effort. But the rewards can be worth it. As Dr. Hynek predicted years ago, the solution to the UFO mystery might provide rich rewards. Those rewards could include an entirely new technology and untapped resources beyond imagination. ☐

OF MARTIAN CATS, PURPLE HIEROGLYPHS, & TALES TOLD IN WINTER

FOLKLORE,
UFOLOGY, CULTURE
AND KNOWLEDGE: A
SKELETAL SURVEY

BY
PETER BROOKESMITH



Dedicated to John Velez

Introduction: The question of the nature of the relationships among ufological events, folklore, and popular culture seems to be stalled, mired in ufology's endemic and perhaps pathological habit of adversarial debate rather than disinterested discussion. This sketch offers a way around the current stalemate and suggests how it may have come about.

Preamble: The matter of the folkloric character of the classic abduction experience (AE) and the classic crash/retrieval account (CRA) has long been on my list of things to write about "one day". This is not that piece, but may - one day - serve as an outline for it. I say this as a warning that I won't be taking the minutiae of (for example) Ed Bullard's arguments to pieces, and neither should the reader expect the copious footnotes and references that a proper treatment will require and

generate. The thoughts that follow were crystallised by two 'threads' on *UFO Up-Dates* - one discussing the idea that popular culture has influenced the AE as reported, the other debating the issue of whether ufology is folkloric in nature.

I think that for all practical purposes there is little difference between these two entities. Popular culture - books, movies, radio and TV broadcasts, newspaper stories, comic strips, even song and dance - draws on folklore on the one hand and contributes to and becomes part of it on the other. Each is a facet of the other when it comes to delineating what is "in the air" in any particular period. This would include the craze for "flying saucers" in the American mind and media in the midsummer of 1947.

Even then and even there one could see folklore, as opposed to reported fact, at work: Martin Kottmeyer has pointed out somewhere how strange it is that while Arnold saw crescent-shaped objects, the flood of UFO reports that immediately followed his seminal sighting confirmed not his report but the media characterisation of what he saw - that is, "flying saucers", disk-shaped objects.

Today we can see the whole of the Dark Side conspiracy theory in ufology, largely founded by Paul Bennewitz and Milton William Cooper - and still being promulgated and developed by the Internet entity who calls himself "Branton" - as a folklore so elaborate in detail and epic in scale as to warrant the epithet "mythic". It is internally self-consistent in its psychopathic way, rationalises (to its own satisfaction) almost everything in modern ufology and politics, and has absolutely no basis in verifiable fact. In the face of this serpentine rendering of all things alien and untrustworthy, only those unacquainted with the gigantic Chinese-whispering gallery that is the Internet, or irretrievably domiciled in the American

"Popular culture - books, movies, radio and TV broadcasts, newspaper stories, comic strips, even song and dance - draws on folklore on the one hand and contributes to and becomes part of it on the other."

Midwest, could seriously propose that ufology is not folkloric.

Abduction Accounts And Popular Culture

In his presentation to the Abduction Study Conference held in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1992, Robert Shaeffer argued that Betty Hill's account of her AE was powerfully influenced by the 1953 film *'Invaders From Mars'* and cited motifs common to each; and he repeated Martin Kottmeyer's suggestion that Barney Hill's perception of aliens with wraparound eyes had its roots in an episode of *'The Outer Limits'* broadcast a few days before an hypnosis session with Dr Benjamin Simon. There is no proof that the Hills saw either of these productions, and none that they did not. Betty Hill told me in April (1997) that she and Barney didn't watch that kind of TV program. Betty's interests are actually rather more intellectual than one might guess from the ufological literature, and it is as reasonable to believe that her recall is accurate as it is to point out that few of us could say with much certainty what TV programs we did or didn't see 35 years ago.

Nonetheless the parallels that Shaeffer, following Kottmeyer, presents between artefacts of popular culture and AE reports are important. Like other skeptics he proposes, with these two examples, a relationship of cause-and-effect between folklore and experience. Although in a grand overview of AE reports I wouldn't exclude that domino effect entirely - especially in AE cases reported after 1975 - I want to explore a more inclusive hypothesis here.

Shaeffer also presented to his 1992 conference audience a 1930 Buck Rogers comic strip that recounted the abduction of a buxom, leggy blonde named Wilma by Martians "evolved from the cat species". He noted that "only one account in Bullard's [1987] catalogue has a greater number of correctly-ordered abduction elements" than this admitted fiction. It was, of course, Bullard who recorded the consistency of certain events in AEs and perceived their 'correct' narrative order. Shaeffer did not suggest that Betty Hill had read or seen this particular comic

strip, ~~pace~~ formerly un-killed canards to the contrary.

Nor did he draw attention to the persistence of the feline motif in AE reports - from people far less likely than Betty and Barney Hill to have seen that 1930 comic strip. Under hypnosis Barney, struggling to rationalise the effect of the aliens' eyes upon him, clutched at the idea that they were "a wildcat up a tree". Then he said: "No. ...I know what it is. It's the Cheshire cat in Alice in Wonderland. ...It disappeared too, and only the eyes remained." Actually, only the ~~smile~~ of the Cheshire Cat remained in Lewis Carroll's classic, but no matter for now. AE reports from the 1970s to the present refer to the "cat eyes" of aliens; they occur in accounts reported by writers as diverse as Linda Moulton Howe and Nigel Watson. There is also a rumour, which I have yet to see in written and attributable form, that cats have been identified as themselves aliens, or at least spies for aliens.

Which may or may not explain why today Betty Hill is caretaker to about 15 moggins, and John Velez has five, and even the Duke of Mendoza concedes castle-room to six of the ungrateful wretches. But perhaps we digress... Nor should we make too much of this commonly-found analogy in pointing out that feline imagery has not dropped out of the alien equation. Another image that abductees call up at least, if not more, frequently in describing their captors is that of the praying mantis. Less specifically, the abductors are likened simply to insects. The cultural connotations of all these images are worth exploring, and **without** any implicit or hidden assumption that this 'knowledge' of aliens is borrowed from the cultural background.

At this point I should like to emphasise two things. First: in drawing attention to the Buck Rogers abduction story, Robert Shaeffer, apparently without realising what he had stumbled on, established that there is little or no distinction between the form of an admitted abduction fiction and that of a genuine AE report, even when no causal connection has been (or can be) shown to exist between them. This discovery could usefully be set against Lawson, McCall and DeHerrera's findings

nothing of what I have said so far, or will say, conflicts with my conviction that many (not all; but possibly most) abductees are honestly, sincerely and truthfully reporting actual experiences - especially those who have eschewed exploring their encounters under hypnosis.

Crashed Saucers And Folklore

In her 1995 book *'UFO Retrievals'* Jenny Randles detects what she calls "Roswell features" in many of the cases she reviews, and appears to offer these features as a kind of imprimatur of authenticity. Among them are dwarfish alien bodies (some gray, some brown), the appearance of "hieroglyphs" on wrecked or landed UFOs, and the incredible lightness and strength of the materials of which they are allegedly made. Rather surprisingly, she doesn't draw attention to other "Roswell features" that crop up time and again in her chronicles - for example, the death-bed confessions of witnesses to key events, and the episodes in which witnesses just **happen** to be able to sneak a look at a UFO or, better, an alien corpse or two before armed guards catch them at it and hustle them away.

The repeated appearance of such episodes should stimulate the phagocytes of scepticism. For it is surely remarkable that such unlikely items as last-hour confessions and snatched inspections of devastating evidence should pop up in so many reports. One is put in mind of nothing so much as urban myths, foatales and whale tumours, which exhibit the same kind of smoothed-over implausibilities and dramatically satisfying forms. In fact, these recurrent "features" would be better called "motifs". Taken together they can be seen as a narrative template - on which are laid the details of a more-or-less common-sense imagining starting from the thought "What if...?". It is hard to avoid the conclusion that crashed-saucer stories are a species of legend, which is what folklorist Jan Harold Brunvand has always said they were.

Let's now look at just one of these features or motifs - the repeated appearance of "hieroglyphs" (and that word, exactly, is used) in CRAs. The (increasingly inestimable) Nigel Watson has shown that false crashed spaceship stories from the

1870s mention hieroglyphs. They turn up again in the Aurora, Texas, crashed airship tall story of 1897. Then they reappear in Frank Scully's *'Behind The Flying Saucers'* (1950), which was partly based on tales concocted for fun and profit by con-men Newton and GeBauer about saucers that *soft*-landed in the US Southwest in the late 1940s. In *'UFO: The Government Files'* (1996) I suggested that many of the numerous Roswell 'witnesses' were reconstructing memories of local folklore derived from the stories of "crashed" saucers put about by Newton and GeBauer; since writing that, I've learned that Jim Moseley picked up crashed-saucer rumours of a similar kind when he visited the area in 1953. The hieroglyphs reported in the Roswell incident at least had some foundation in reality, in that memories and accounts of them would appear, in some witnesses' cases, to be based on flowery patterns printed on tape used to hold together the Mogul balloon array whose debris, most likely, came to earth on the Foster Ranch in June 1947. Even before the Roswell incident achieved its present notoriety, however, hieroglyphs were mentioned by informants who contributed to Len Stringfield's series of *'Status Reports'* as well as in other cases proven - as well as these things can be proven - to be phoney mentioned in Jenny Randles' book (op cit).

Fictions And Realities

Overwhelmingly, the hieroglyph motif appears in CRAs that have been shown to be at worst fraudulent and at best mistaken. Unlike the alien abduction scenario (AAS: which is often markedly different from actual AEs), there isn't a Crash Retrieval Scenario; but there is a CRA 'cluster' of scenarios (folk stories) that, like the abduction scenario, have their own natural internal narrative logic. Martin Kottmeyer has proposed that the AAS exhibits an "intuitive ordering principle" - in other words, a narrative logic - that is distinct from real-life experience. The exact parallels between accounts of ritual

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satanic abuse and the AAS revealed by Gwen L. Dean at the 1992 Abduction Study Conference would support the contention that the AAS follows the structure of tales and stories - that is, fiction; for, as with the AAS, no material evidence has ever been produced to show unequivocally that allegations of ritual satanic abuse have any basis in reality. In this connection we may also bear in mind Aristotle's dictum-cum-discovery in the Poetics that all fictions essentially conform to one of seven (or is it ten?) basic "plots".

Real-life events, even complex ones that in the telling become "stories", are not as neat or as consistent as fictional ones structured by an intuitive ordering principle. If they were, it would (for example) be possible to predict the order of events (a la Bullard) in the battles of Borodino, Sarajevo, Antietam, Passchaendale, Alamein and Ia Drang - to name but a few - from a structural analysis of the Battle of Hastings; and likewise from any one of these to all of the remainder. The exercise soon collapses under the weight of its own futility.

One might, in light of the foregoing, then consider it worth exploring the proposition that the real significance of AEs, the AAS and CRAs is not in their literal, but in their figurative reality. That is to say: their meaning lies more in their dramatic content than in the possibility that they may describe objectively real, three- [mass, space, time] or four- [three of space, one of time] dimensional events. One of the more intriguing corollaries of this position is this: even claimed AEs that on inspection turn out to be fraudulent or factitious (for instance the product of deliberately or unwittingly coached confabulation under hypnosis) are no less revealing, from the cultural point of view, than the genuine article. John Rimmer made a similar point in a sadly neglected essay, 'Facts, Frauds, and Fairytales' in an early issue of 'MUFOB'.

At this point a further shake of the sieve is called for. Without it, a persistent confusion (or mistaken, but still hidden, set of assumptions) is likely to persist in the literalist-versus-skeptic debate about the role of folklore in ufology. Whereas in the

ploy the plethora of detected folkloric elements to weigh the balance of judgement - decisively, in my view - against the likelihood that CRAs describe real events, the equivalent exercise with AAS does not dispose of the abduction experience and its apparent reality. Similarly, a species of literary-critical analysis of the dramatic content of both the AAS and even AEs may be very fruitful, but it does not explain how the experience itself arises. Nor, I submit, can it.

Within those limits, exploring the folkloric nature of alien abductions can hardly be called debunking. The story that abductions spin - the way they "speak to our condition" - is a separate issue from their reality. To adduce a couple of analogies: no one doubts the reality of the Lincoln County War (c.1882, New Mexico), but the meaning of it - its mythic significance - will vary according to whether you are an historian, a Hollywood producer or scriptwriter, or a film critic, or a cultural analyst (anthropologist) - and it will vary as well, most probably, in accordance with the era in which you live as one of those. And, conversely, you can argue - as many have - over the historical reality and nature of Jesus of Nazareth, but the many meanings and effects of Christianity wouldn't disappear overnight were someone to prove conclusively, tomorrow, that the man himself never really existed. In each of these cases, meaning and significance are separate from questions of the objective reality of the original inspiration. I submit that the same may be said of abductions.

So while I am deeply fascinated by both the AAS and AEs as embodying myths for our times, I have no ready explanation for the mechanism of the genuine, 24-karat abduction experience itself. The literalists' ETH-related "justification" is not, in my view, impossible, but it does seem to me that the weight of reason and evidence is against it. Meanwhile, the various psychological explanations proffered by various degrees of skeptics (and even a few believers and debunkers) fit some cases - but not all. It may be that we are dealing with a variety of mental and physical phenomena that meet and fructify in some common ground - rather as from the soil sprouts an infinite variety of plants.

But as yet no one has published a satisfactory, all-embracing, over-arching psychologically-based hypothesis that accounts for the many tendrils of the AE.

The ETH-based interpretation of the AE has such a powerful appeal in part because it does promise answers to all the questions that these experiences pose (quite apart from any emotional allure of the ETH itself). Whether or not the ETH delivers on its promises is outside the scope of this sketch. However: although abductees are reported typically to resist the literal reading of their experience ("I was hoping you'd say I was crazy, now I've got to believe it really happened"), it is probably less disturbing to put a materialist construction on the AE than to contemplate the abyss of one's own madness, with all the deracinating distrust of direct experience that implies. The polarities of the skeptic-versus-believer "debate" have left the common-sense middle ground empty - bereft of uncontentious observations and demonstrations that very weird things can and do occur in, and to, the consciousness of irreproachably sane people. To suggest that the AE may be a "psychological" phenomenon is emphatically not to impugn the rationality of the experienter.

So I sit in my box in this curiously decorated, somewhat surreal theatre, suspended somewhere between the opera being sung so magnificently on stage, and the actual, irremediable, numinous Gotterdammerung. And I wait for a fat lady to sing.

-from 'Jottings from the Void' (Volume 42 of the Intellectual Journals of the Duke of Mendoza)

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A UFO SKEPTIC SPEAKS AT MUFON ONTARIO MEETING



By Nikolaos Balaskas

From an article Nick wrote for the Ontario Skeptics Newsletter

At the monthly MUFON Ontario General Meeting of June 25 we had Dr. Michael De Robertis, a York University astronomer and executive member of Ontario Skeptics, give a talk titled "UFOs and Aliens: A Skeptic's Perspective". Michael's talk followed the one given by MUFON Ontario President, Tom Theofanous, to the Ontario Skeptics the evening before. Although both MUFON Ontario and Ontario Skeptics hold their meetings at the same Unity Church building in Toronto at 175 St. Clair Avenue West, both groups were surprised by this coincidence.

Present were many of the over 200 MUFON Ontario members, their guests and visitors. There were numerous questions and comments from the audience for Michael at the conclusion of his talk. I complimented Michael for his honest presentation, in which he included reasons why he felt that UFOs were not necessarily synonymous with alien spacecraft. Although I did not agree with many views expressed by Michael regarding UFOs, his talk was not one of a closed-minded 'scientific authority' with all the answers but rather someone who sharing his professional opinions, which he qualified numerous times with expressions such as "I think", "we believe", "I feel", etc.

On a few topics such as alien abduction which Michael also covered in his talk, his skeptical views may have unintentionally hurt a few who knew differently from their own personal experiences much like the astronomer

meeting the extraterrestrial being in the movie 'Contact' (based on the book by Carl Sagan), who also knew what she experienced was real but couldn't convince others.

Michael gave many reasons why he does not accept that some UFOs are piloted by extraterrestrials. One of these is that there is no reason for UFOs to have lights to operate in our atmosphere at night if they do not wish to be detected. Another reason are the alien abduction stories of human-alien hybrids. Of course if the UFO lights are a result of the propulsion system they use to move around, then we cannot help but notice them and if aliens and humans have a common ancestry or a Creator that made us the same (we are told in the Bible that some angels and humans produced giants), then these two reasons are not valid for dismissing UFOs. Then again, within MUFON Ontario are some members who are convinced that some UFOs are alien spacecraft but cannot accept that alien abductions are real for much the same emotional reasons why scientists, like Carl Sagan, who accept that extraterrestrial beings exist throughout the universe and accept that aliens have visited the Earth in the past and will again in the future but refuse to accept that extraterrestrial visits are happening in the present.

Nevertheless, UFOs are still being reported. Michael thinks that many of these UFOs have Earthly origins since the number of triangular shaped UFOs have increased with the introduction of 'Stealth' technology. No one would disagree that many UFOs can be explained away this way but a few cannot and not because of insufficient data. Since the simplest explanation which satisfies all the facts should be considered as the correct one, sometimes we are forced to consider more exotic explanations for UFOs when there are no simple ones.

Michael said that he would expect alien artefacts to have different isotope ratios if their origin was outside of our solar system. Although something like this has been reported recently, it would not rule out the possibility that an artefact with Earth-like isotope ratios was alien in origin (maybe they came from a world near our sun) or that an artefact without Earth-like isotope ratios is alien in origin (we can use mass spectrometers or similar devices to separate the isotopes which we would then use to produce the artefact). Just because a premise seems reasonable doesn't necessarily mean it's a valid one. For example, we observe grain of sand sized objects brilliantly burn up in our upper atmosphere (meteors) which would suggest that less conspicuous but much larger objects cannot exist. Well, just a few months ago, scientists were shocked when presented with evidence that objects the size of a house were bombarding the Earth's upper atmosphere at the incredible rate of 10 to 20 a minute.. One gram of scientific observation is always weighs more than one kilogram of scientific opinions. This is why MUFON Ontario exists. Someone must study this continuing phenomena which others have been too quick to dismiss altogether.

Michael's talk was very well received by those that were there to hear his well researched presentation. We hope Tom's talk at Ontario Skeptics and Michael's talk at MUFON Ontario are the first of many more such talks which I feel benefit both of our organisations. Members of Ontario Skeptics are welcome to attend all MUFON Ontario General Meetings and even participate with on going research projects or follow up on some of the numerous calls we get from the public and even the police. Public education is also a very impor-

(Continued on page 16)

THE 1996
CANADIAN UFO SURVEY [Part 2]
by
Chris Rutkowski

If we look only at those **Unknowns** with a quality or **Reliability** rating of six or greater, we then are left with 27 higher-quality **Unknowns** in 1996 (10.5% of the total). Of these, only 18 had a **Strangeness** rating of seven or greater (7% of the total). This value is comparable with other years: 4.9% in 1989, 4.6% in 1990, 7.3% in 1991 and 7.6% in 1992. As a comparison, USAF Blue Book studies found only three to four percent of their cases were "excellent" **Unknowns**.

It is interesting to speculate how the number of **Unknowns** would change if the Insufficient Information category was reduced. More than 40% of all reported UFO sightings in 1996 had insufficient information for researchers to make a proper identification of the objects observed. This large proportion is due to several factors, including lack of witness co-operation and sparsity of data in the original report. It must be remembered that case data was obtained from a variety of sources with varying views and investigative abilities. What may be "Unknown" to one might be "Explained" to another. The subjective interpreting of the minimal case data received from contributors has naturally increased the number of cases in the **Insufficient Information** category. Because contributors almost never send in-depth case reports for each of the cases they contribute, it is difficult to second-guess the quality of the case based on minimal coded case data received. By adopting a subjective standard during actual data entry, a better balance of evaluations

is expected. However, this does not eliminate the possibility that some high-quality unknowns could be down-graded at some point in the data entry process. It is hoped that with more intense research on the subject of UFO case data, a better solution might be realised.

It should be emphasised again that even high-quality **Unknowns** do not imply alien visitation. Each case may still have an explanation following further investigation. And of those that remain unexplained, they may remain unexplained, but still are not incontrovertible proof of extraterres-

TABLE 4
EVALUATION OF CANADIAN UFO DATA

	EXPLAINED		INSUF. INFO.		POSS. EXPLAN.		UNEXPLAINED	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1989	0	0	74	52.5	47	33.3	20	14.2
1990	0	0	90	46.4	78	40.2	26	13.4
1991	2	1.2	80	48.5	69	41.8	14	8.5
1992	17	8	83	37	74	33	49	22
1993	154	31.5	170	34.8	115	23.5	50	10.2
1994/5	71	19.1	124	33.3	131	35.2	46	12.4
1996	24	9.3	105	40.7	87	33.7	42	16.3
Total	268	14.5	726	39.4	601	32.6	247	13.4

trial intervention or some mysterious natural phenomenon.

Additional Analysis of Unknowns

In order to gain a greater understanding of cases classified as **Unknown**, UFOROM members and associates held a special meeting to study and discuss these reports. Available information about each of the 42 cases originally listed as **Unknown** was discussed in detail and the cases re-assessed. Original classifications of **Strangeness** and **Reliability** were also re-examined for each case. Through this process, the identification of only 13 higher-reliability

and higher-strangeness cases was made. This re-evaluation therefore left only 5% of the total number of 1996 cases as "good" unknowns.

It was the consensus of the group that this process was most revealing in that a better appreciation of the difficulties in using UFO data was gained. Many reports were good as "stories" but seemed to have possible or probable explanations. Some witnesses' descriptions were deemed less than accurate and a significant fraction of cases appeared to need more investigation.

In short, the exercise showed that the analysis of UFO reports is a very tricky procedure, relying heavily upon

mere text of subjective estimates and interpretations of witnesses' less-than-accurate observations. Members of the group recommended that accounts of UFO sightings should not be taken at face value and that caution be used in interpreting what was "really" seen.

Earthquakes and UFOs

One popular theory regarding the identity of UFOs is that they are "earth lights." These are poorly-understood natural phenomena with yet-to-be-determined characteristics and mechanisms that occur due to geological or geophysical forces. Some earth lights are thought to occur in areas near seismic activity or active fault zones. The implication is that stresses within the Earth generate electromagnetic energy which may become luminous and be observed by witnesses. It should be noted that no such mechanism has been determined and recognised by the geologic and geophysical community. However, independent studies by some researchers suggest there are correla-

tions between seismic events and UFOs.

With this in mind, 1996 Canadian seismic data was obtained from geophysical sources. There were 51 earthquakes of magnitude 4 or greater in Canada in 1996. Seven were of magnitude 5 or greater. One was of magnitude 6 or greater. Almost without exception, all earthquakes were located along the coast of British Columbia or in southern Quebec, both areas of high seismic activity. Few were strong enough and near enough to population centres to be significantly noticed.

In previous earth lights and related tectonic strain theory (TST) studies, earthquakes and UFOs were not directly linked. That is, earthquakes and UFO sightings did not occur simultaneously nor in geographical proximity. In some studies, seismic events and UFOs were geographically separated by more than 700 kilometres. In terms of time correlations, UFO and seismic data were considered correlated if events occurred within six months of each other.

Given that a large number of UFOs were reported from both Quebec and British Columbia, many Canadian UFO cases *could* be correlated with weak to moderate seismic events within the country. In fact, 40% of all Canadian cases occurred in earthquake-prone regions in BC and Quebec. If we allow that southern Ontario is within a few hundred kilometres of seismically-active regions in Quebec, then more than 60% of all cases fall easily within these parameters. If no direct causality is required, and if large time separations are allowed, the majority of cases could be explained as earth lights or TST effects.

One problem with this interpretation is that most UFOs already have plausible conventional explanations such as misidentifications of aircraft,

fireballs and stars. If a misidentified aeroplane is "correlated" with a distant, weak earth tremor, one could wonder whether this was in fact a significant result beyond the statistics.

Summary of Results

As with previous annual surveys, the 1996 *Canadian UFO Survey* does not offer any positive proof that UFOs are either alien spacecraft or a specific natural phenomenon. However, it does show that some phenomenon which is called a UFO is continually being observed by witnesses.

The typical UFO sighting is that of two people together observing a moving, distant white or red light for several minutes. In most cases, the UFO is likely to be eventually identified as a conventional object such as an aircraft or astronomical object. However, in a small percentage of cases, some UFOs do not appear to have an easy explanation and they may be given the label of "unknown."

What are these "unknowns?" From a completely scientific standpoint, we have no way of extrapolating a definitive explanation based on this data. Biases for or against the view that UFOs are extraterrestrial spacecraft often hinder the scientific process and cloud the issue. A 'debunker' who has a strong belief that UFO reports are all fabrications or misinterpretations may tend to dismiss a truly unusual case out of hand, whereas a 'believer' who believes aliens are indeed visiting Earth may read something sinister into a case with a conventional explanation.

All that a study of this kind can do is present the data and some rudimentary analyses. The recognition that there really are only a handful of true unknowns among the UFO cases might lead a debunker to believe they, too, might find an explanation if enough effort were to be expended, but to a believer this might be the required

proof that some UFOs have no explanations.

The **Evaluation** value is a subjective value imposed by the investigator or compiler (or both) with a scale such that the low values represent cases with little information content and observers of limited observing abilities and the higher values represent those cases with excellent witnesses (pilots, police, etc.) and also are well-investigated. Naturally, cases with higher values are preferred.

For the 1996 data, all cases given an **Unknown** label were reviewed by a group of UFO researchers, investigators and other interested individuals. Consensus was reached on the ultimate level to which each case could be described as "unexplained." This avoided later accusations that coding was done by one or two persons who may have had unconscious biases in interpreting the UFO data. The group agreed upon 13 higher-quality, unexplained cases as the "best" of the year. The cases are summarised later in this report.

The interpretation of this baker's dozen is that these cases were among the most challenging of all the reports received in 1996. It should be noted that most UFO cases go unreported, and that there may be ten times as many UFO sightings that go unreported as those which get reported to public, private or military agencies. Furthermore, it should be noted that some cases with lower reliability ratings suffer only from incomplete investigations, and that they may well be more mysterious than those on the above list. And, above all, these cases are *not* proof of extraterrestrial visitation.

What does the UFO data tell us?

We can now take another look at the questions posed by Hendry about the quality of UFO data:

1. *Does the report collection reflect truly random sampling?*

The randomness of the UFO sample is of course dependent on whether UFO reporting is itself random. Can we be sure that UFO witnesses represent a true cross-section of the population or is there some bias in favour of those who 'believe in UFOs' and therefore may report IFOs as UFOs? Are there other biases involved? We know, for example, that military observations of UFOs are not routinely made available to civilian UFO researchers. Are these cases somehow different from civilian-reported cases?

2. *Have the individual cases been adequately validated?*

In a perfect world, each UFO case would be documented fully and thoroughly investigated by trained researchers with unlimited time and expenses, as well as through perfect co-operation with civilian and military authorities. In reality, though, this hardly is the situation. UFO investigation is often done by untrained UFO enthusiasts with little free time and working in isolation from official sources of useful information. Many UFO investigators do not have backgrounds in astronomy, meteorology or aviation, each of which would be useful in evaluating reports of unidentified flying objects. Thus, there is no way to ensure that all cases contributed were 'adequately' validated.

3. *Are apples and oranges being compared? Are NLs necessarily the same kind of UFO as DDs?*

We do not know the answer to this question. However, since nocturnal objects constitute the vast majority of UFO cases in the sample, this may not be a problem. However, we can also ask if all nocturnal objects are themselves homogeneous. Is UFO data concurrently valid with itself?

4. *Are differing details among cases obscured through simplifi-*

cation for the purpose of comparisons?

This is true to a certain extent. A witness who chooses red as a primary colour of a UFO with red and white lights may have made an error of judgement. Similarly, when the data is encoded, 'red and white' is considered differently from 'white and red'. So, in some categories, this would be a valid concern. In others, such as date and location, this is not a problem. However, when evaluations of cases are made, subjective interpretations will certainly cause some difficulties.

5. *Does the study imply the question: "Surely this mass of data proves UFOs exist?"*

No. The present study only shows that people are reporting sightings of unusual objects, some of which have no simple explanation.

6. *Do the correlations really show causality?*

No. No correlative studies were performed on the data.

Other comments

UFOs were reported at a rate of about 21 per month across all of Canada in 1996. Throughout the past eight years, the rate has been approximately 19 per month.

UFO witnesses range from farmhands to airline pilots and from teachers to police officers. Witnesses represent all age groups and racial origin. What is being observed? In most cases, only ordinary objects. However, this begs a question. If people are reporting things that can be explained, then the objects they observed were "really" there. Were the objects we can't identify "really" there as well? If so, what were they?

These are questions that only continued and rational research can answer, and only if researchers have the support and encouragement of both

scientists and the public.

**1996 Canadian UFO Survey:
Summary of Results**

- The number of UFO reports made in Canada has increased slightly during the past eight years. There now are approximately 190 cases of unidentified flying objects reported each year, up slightly from previous years' calculations.
- The distribution of UFO reports in Canada was somewhat related to the distribution of population. Western Canada was over-represented in terms of UFO report numbers, while the Maritimes are under-represented.
- During the past eight years, there was no definite monthly trend found in Canadian UFO reports. Each year, there appear to be regional monthly fluctuations. UFOs seem to be as likely to be reported in summer as in winter.
- Approximately 80% of UFO sightings were merely observations of lights in the night sky.
- About 13% of all UFO reports are unexplained. This percentage of unknowns falls to about 5% when only higher-quality cases are considered.
- Most UFO sightings occurred between 9:00 pm and midnight.
- UFO incidents usually had more than one witness.
- In 1996, the typical UFO sighting lasted nearly half an hour, a dramatic increase from last year's average of seven minutes.
- Most reported UFOs were white in colour.

The most important findings of this study include the fact that UFO sightings have continued to be reported at a constant level over the past several years. People still report observing unusual objects in the sky, and some

of these objects do not have obvious explanations. Many witnesses are pilots, police and other individuals with reasonably good observing capabilities and good judgement. Although most reported UFOs are simply lights in the night sky, a significant number are objects with definite shapes observed within the witnesses' frame of reference.

Popular opinion to the contrary, there is yet to be any incontrovertible evidence that some UFO cases involve extraterrestrial contact. However, the continued reporting of UFOs by the public suggests a need for further examination of the phenomenon by social, medical and/or physical scientists.

For further information, contact:
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E-mail: rutkows@cc.umanitoba.ca

TOP TEN REASONS ALIENS ABDUCT HUMANS

by
Glenn Joyner

10. They're still trying to figure out if there's intelligent life down here.
9. They're looking for book royalties.
8. It's easier than abducting elephants.
7. Voyeurism - They like to watch.
6. Because we're here...
5. They're trying to find Kathy Ireland.
4. Years long project aimed at establishing relations with producers of television show, 'Sightings'.
3. They like seeing themselves in the weekly World News headlines.
2. Trying to enlighten mankind, but keep accidentally wiping out the knowledge they pass along when implanting screen memories.

And the Number One Reason
Aliens Abduct Humans...

It's.....it's A COOKBOOK!!!!

**FROM
FOLEY'S
LIBRARY...**

by C.R. Foley



COFFEE TABLE UFOLOGY

"Our readers are probably wondering why I have chosen to cover this form of UFO literature for inclusion in this column". (C.R.Foley)

In recent years the proliferation of so called coffee table books on Fortean phenomena has been nothing short of amazing. Of course I am referring to those oversized pictorial introductory reviews that incorporate brief passages of newspaper style text at discount prices.

Our readers are probably wondering why I have chosen to cover this form of UFO literature for inclusion in this column. After all, books normally reviewed here are either rare, or if otherwise, are related works that are not well known within the UFO community. I have elected, however, to review some of my favourite coffee table books (some of these are rare) for those who are interested in such items, and also to illustrate how these works are important to Ufology.

The origins of the coffee table book probably dates back at least to the 19th century when travellers had accounts of their journeys published. These *travelogues* were often naive little works that became quite popular as they opened the world up to a population that rarely ventured more than a few miles from their place of birth. They were often lavishly illustrated and written in a conversationalist-like style which held the reader's interest.

During the first modern wave of UFO activity (1947-1957), numerous magazine articles (as well as books)

successfully introduced the subject to the general public. For a discussion of the most important and influential of these publications, see my column on *FATE MAGAZINE* in the March 1996 issue of the *Canadian Ufologist* (volume 3.1).

Subsequently, a decline in the number of quality reports which was followed by a period of general apathy, seemed to sound the death knell for the UFO until the 1965 wave resurrected public interest. Publishers then clamoured for new UFO material while resorting to re-issuing early classics in paper back.

Coffee table UFO literature became a prominent feature on retail bookshelves by the mid sixties as publishers scrambled for their share of the market. Dell Publishing did a series of Saucer magazines that year and Real



Magazine published case histories in their *Flying Saucers Illustrated* while mainstream periodicals such as *True*, *Saga*, and *Argosy* jumped on the UFO bandwagon. Even *Life* did a fantastic colour spread on UFOs in their popu-



lar April 1st 1966 edition which featured the banner on the front cover, *The week of the Flying Saucers*.

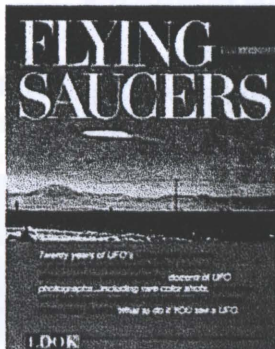
A large, new wave of introductory volumes on UFOs also appeared including what is probably the first, true coffee-table book on the subject.

Despite a brief lull in publishing

activity following the notorious Condon Committee report in the late 1960s, publishers again clamoured for titles in the 1970s. This was partly due to the 1971 UFO wave and also as a result of the success of the Warner Brothers motion picture, *The Exorcist*, in 1973. Words cannot convey the frenzy and circus-like atmosphere that pervaded this period of the publishing industry. The psychedelic 60s had resurrected interest in the occult and by the early 70s the topic had rooted itself into the mainstream consciousness. The media raced to feed the public's insatiable appetite for all matters concerning the occult including UFOs. Subsequently, there was a deluge of coffee table books on various occult topics which of course included Flying Saucers. Publishers printed entire series (or *libraries*) on the occult in a *shotgun* approach to capture their share of the market.

Therefore, in keeping with the true spirit of the coffee table work, I present to you this issue's offering which is indeed short on text, yet loaded with illustrations!

Flying Saucers (Cowles UPI 1967) David C. Whitney ed.



In 1967 Cowles published a large format edition called *Flying Saucers*. This was advertised as a (one time) *Look Magazine* special as published by the *Look* Book Division of United Press International and Cowles Communications Inc. and was apparently available in both oversized hard and soft bound formats. It consisted of 66 pages and was lavishly illustrated both in colour and black and white. I purchased a copy of the magazine edition when new, and paid

the (then) outrageous sum of \$1.00 for it.

In 1968 a paperback (and hardcover) edition was published under the title, *Flying Saucers* (Subtitled: *Twenty-One Years of UFO's... The Great Mystery of Our Time*). The hardback may have been bound specifically for or by the public libraries. These institutions often bind soft-bound works as hardcover to increase their shelf life, hence their utilitarian value.

Jack V. Fox of UPI was responsible for the text and did an excellent job guiding readers through two decades of UFOs, in which he highlighted some of the classic cases.

While I do not profess to be an expert on the history of UFO coffee table books, this is the oldest such item that I am aware of.

Visitors From Outer Space (Doubleday 1976) Roy Stemman



This volume is from Doubleday's, *A New Library of the Supernatural* and features some handsome UFO art as well as the obligatory cavalcade of colour and black and white photographs. The volume also features a section on ancient astronauts, which was vogue during the Von Daniken dominated 70s. Occasionally I thumb through this volume primarily be-

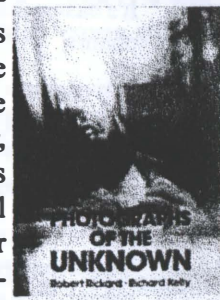
cause of the wonderful artwork which depicts classic UFO events as well as the many rare photographs of UFO personalities in action.

Phenomena A Book of Wonders (Pantheon Books 1977) John Michell and Robert Rickard



A wonderful collection of Fortean anthologies as compiled by UFO author Michell (*The Flying Saucer Vision*, London 1967) and Fortean Times founder Rickard. Assorted UFO related material includes; "Cities and islands in the sky", "Phantom ships", "Anomalous fossils" (evidence of ancient astronauts), "Odd clouds", plus a feature on fairy lore and the Walton UFO abduction.

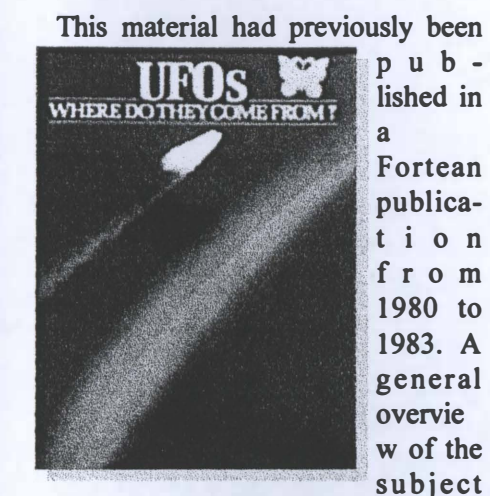
Photographs of the Unknown (New English Library 1980) Robert Rickard & Richard Kelly



Following *Phenomena*, Rickard's second coffee table outing (he also wrote *UFOs*, Gloucester Press 1979, for the small fry). This is by far my favourite coffee table book. Although Fortean phenomena is chronicled again, it contains a large UFO section that is loaded with important photographs. Many of these pictures are rarely (if ever) seen in print elsewhere. A large number of them are reproduced in colour such as the 1979 Canary Island object, the 1973 Co-coyoc Mexico sighting plus a number of interesting shots of UFOs over water. There are also some wonderful

reproductions of some of Stella Lansing's photographs in the chapter called 'Psychic Phenomena'. Her famous 'monk' photograph graces the dust jacket of this volume. Many of Lansing's pictures would be of interest to Ufologists, and I intend to cover her fascinating story in a future edition of the *Canadian Ufologist*. The chapter entitled, "Unusual Natural Phenomena" also contains much UFO related material. I strongly recommend this work for both the armchair critic as well as the serious student of the subject. Unfortunately, this is a scarce title, and it can command a hefty price in the collector's market.

UFOs: Where do they come from? (Orbis 1984/Blackcat 1988) Peter Brookesmith editor



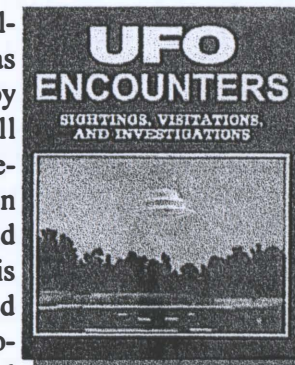
This material had previously been published in a Fortean publication from 1980 to 1983. A general overview of the subject is presented with an interesting chapter called "Unidentified Submarine Objects". Reproduced is that perplexing photograph of the "antenna" sprouting up from the bottom of the sea, as well as other anomalous objects.

The UFO Phenomenon (Time-Life 1987)

Part of the popular *Mysteries of the Unknown* series. Although were getting into a lot of retread here, all of these books have something to offer. I was fascinated to see a large colour shot of the first issue of *Fate Magazine*. I am happy to say that readers of

the *Canadian Ufologist* were treated to a superior example of this item in the March 1996 issue (though not in colour)! Unlike previous titles, much of this coffee table work focuses on the abduction phenomena. Both in concept and layout, this is an extremely attractive volume which would make even Stephen Spielberg drool.

UFO Encounters (Publications Int. 1992) Jerome Clark & Marcello Truzzi



This volume was penned by two well known researchers in the field and again one is presented with a pictorial overview of the subject. Many fine photographs of famous UFO personalities and events bring one up to date on the subject. Of particular interest is a photograph of the "official text of the controversial Condon Report" which shows a colour shot of all three volumes. When was the last time you saw a copy?

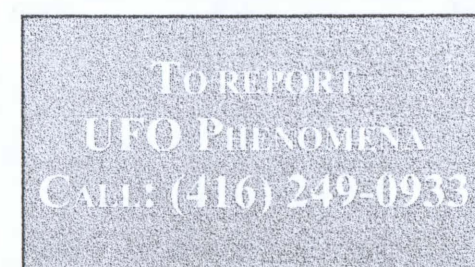
Encyclopedia of the Unexplained (Blitz 1993) Reuben Stone & Allan Hall

This voluminous work covers a wide variety of Fortean phenomena and UFOs fill an entire section. This is a well researched volume and the authors present readers with an un-

usually comprehensive and perceptive narrative on a host of unusual phenomena. Due to its scope, I would recommend this title for those who wish to sink their teeth into something more substantial.

Conclusion

As coffee table works are intended as primers for a general audience, they seldom (if ever) are the topic of discussion in other UFO literature. As a result, a generation of such works could become 'lost', or at least unfamiliar with new students of the subject. Should this occur, this would be most unfortunate as I feel that some of these works are important to Ufology for a couple of reasons. First, these works reproduce a lot of photographs that otherwise would only remain in the hands of the privileged few. When reading, I always appreciate having seen a picture of the subject matter and also of the personalities who shaped the event. This leads me to giving you my second reason for referencing such works, which is that they help to bring the subject matter alive, so to speak. Any teacher will tell you that is the key to successful teaching and instruction. Further, that teaching and instructing are important functions of most technical literature. Therefore, the referencing of such coffee table material can only serve to augment that which is printed in other works on the subject.



(Continued from page 9)

tant part of MUFON Ontario. With the growing popularity of paranormal movies and shows on television, it is important to help people separate fact from Hollywood fantasy. ■

SARNIA 'CIGAR' UFO SUNDAY APRIL 20, 1997

*A report from Dorothy Lewis,
MUFON Ontario,
Sarnia Section Director*

Witness was out for a walk that afternoon and had stopped to sit near the river, on a park bench overlooking the St. Clair River. The day was sunny, almost cloudless, so visibility and ceiling were unlimited.

Directly in front of her, suddenly appeared a greyish-white object, suspended in mid-air, with the bottom part of the object positioned at 25 degrees above the horizon. The town of Port Huron, Michigan, was in the background, underneath the object, at the other side of the river.

The object was a long tube-like shape, rounded at both ends, and fuzzy or diffuse around all edges. It was suspended vertically and it's apparent size was about one inch or so long it's vertical axis and perhaps 3/8 inch across it's lateral axis.

Her attention was then taken by a white spherical object which seemed to have been discharged from the original object. This white sphere travelled a short distance, perhaps three inches apparent distance, northwards toward Lake Huron and vanished.

She then directed her attention back to the original object, but it too, had vanished.

Neither object made any sound, pulsed or wobbled in flight.

Shortly afterward, a small plane

passed across her field of vision also travelling northward towards Lake Huron. This made a clearly audible sound. The river was quiet and no shipping was in view to mask any sound the object might have made, by the sound of a ship's engine.

There was a brisk breeze from the west making the water slightly choppy, so she could not have seen any reflections in the water, but the object seemed to be suspended over the western side of St. Clair River. ■

OTTAWA UFO REPORT TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 1997

As reported to MUFON Ontario's Joe Daniels.

I observed a phenomenon in the sky over Ottawa last Tuesday early in the evening beginning at 5:30 pm & ending approximately 5:40 pm.

Before I give you any details about my 'sighting', I'd like to tell you a bit about myself.

I have studied science all my life, and I think I am a well qualified observer. I have an open mind to UFOs. To me they are a mystery that has yet no definitive answer. There certainly seems to be some unexplained phenomena here.

I am a xx-year old software engineer. It was at my office as I went outside for a smoke break when I how clear and blue the sky was. I saw a jet way up, so high that it was smaller than the size of an outstretched thumb. I saw some seagulls soaring so high above that they almost disappeared.

When a co-worker came by I remarked how clear the sky was. He looked up, and pointed to a spot in the sky about 45 degrees above the horizon and said, "I wonder what that is". He said he saw a "spot" in the sky that

appeared to be stationary, and speculated that perhaps it was a balloon. It took me some effort to see what he was pointing at because it was so tiny a spot. Then he left and I continued to observe the whitish spot in the sky. It never moved. A balloon could be expected to drift in the period of time that I observed it over several minutes.

I was just about to decide that it had to be a helicopter when suddenly it moved very quickly towards the zenith above me. The manner of it's movement clearly was not the way a balloon or a helicopter could possibly move. As it moved it grew very bright, then dim again, as if perhaps it was reflecting sunlight at times. If this change in brightness were due to a reflective surface, it would have to be like a mirror - it was that bright.

Suddenly this object was joined by another, and then two more. These objects moved in a manner like flies buzzing around each other. Sometimes only one, or two, or three, or four were visible at any given moment. I could only guess that when objects disappeared, it was because they went too high to be seen, then dropped lower again. The entire event was at the very edge of my visual acuity. Finally, only one object remained, and it moved off to my right and was soon out of sight.

When I got home that evening, I pondered over what I had seen. Certainly there is no explanation for it. Atmospheric phenomenon, weather balloons, air craft of any sort: none of these things can account for what I saw. It will forever remain a mystery to me. ■

**THE CANADIAN UFOLOGIST
NEEDS YOUR INPUT. LETTERS
TO THE EDITOR AND ARTICLE
SUBMISSIONS ARE WELCOME.**